Law Minister's Conference held in New Delhi

756. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL; Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Law Minister's Conference was recently held in New Delhi in which Home Ministers of States also participated;

(b) if so, what are the details of discussions held/outcome thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to bring forward any legislation during Monsoon Session of Parliament regarding procedure to be followed for expeditious appointment of Judges of High Courts and for their transfer policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The major decisions taken in the meeting are:—

(1) To amend the Code of Criminal Procedure broadly on the lines of recommendations made by the Law Commission in its 154th Report;

(2) To amend the Code of Civil Procedure to avoid delay in completing procedural requirements and to promote alternative dispute resolution mechanisms;

(3) To launch statewise drive for one year with effect from 15 August, 1997 for holding Lok Adalats on quarterly basis to help reduce pendency of cases;

(4) To restore position with regard to appointment of Judges as it-existed prior to 1993 Supreme Court's decision in the case of Advocates on Record Association Vs. Union of India;

(5) To take up review/repeal of obsolete laws on priority basis;

(6) Making available legal information like Central enactments and decided cases on internet for easy accessibility; and

(7) To amend Advocates Act, 1961 & Notaries Act, 1952.

(c) No, Sir.

Reverting to earlier practice in appointment and transfer of Judges

757. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:
SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since decided to revert to earlier practice in the matter of appointment and transfer of Judges of High Court and Supreme Court; and

(b) if so, the need and justification thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) and (b) The Government decided to introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament to make changes in the existing system of appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court, Chief Justices of the High Courts, Judges of the High Courts and transfer of Judges of the High Courts. The Government felt it necessary to amend the Constitution to reiterate and spell out the intent of the framers of the Constitution clearly and unambiguously with a view to keep it beyond the pale of any controversy. Accordingly, the Constitution (Eighty-Second Amendment) Bill, 1997 was circulated to members of the Lok Sabha in March, 1997.

Central Financial Assistance to Tripura for construction of Court building and houses

758. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Central Government provides 50% Central Financial Assistance for the construction of court building and houses;

(b) if so, the total financial assistance provided to Tripura in this regard so far;

(c) whether Government have not given its 50% share to Tripura State during the last three years;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what are the reasons for delay in this regard together with the details of time bound programme formulated to remit the balance amount and by when the amount is likely to be released to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) (a) to (e) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the development of infrastructural facilities for the judiciary was introduced from 1993-94. This scheme aims at supplementing the efforts of the State Governments and is confined to construction of Court Buildings and residences for the Judges. One of the main criteria of the scheme is that the State Government must provide a matching share to the amount allocated by the Central Government. An amount of Rs. 122 lakhs has been released to Tripura from 1993-94 to 1996-97. During 1997-98 an amount of Rs. 20 lakhs as first instalment of Central share has been released to Tripura out of the tentative allocation of Rs. 40 lakhs for this financial year.

Constitutional amendment for appointment of Judges

759. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to bring amendment in the constitution regarding the procedure for the appointment of High Courts and Supreme Court Judges;

(b) what are the details of the amendment and its scope?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) and (b) The Government decided to introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament to make changes in the existing system of appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court, Chief Justices of the High Courts, Judges of the High Courts and transfer of Judges of the High Courts. The Government felt it necessary to amend the Constitution to reiterate and spell out the intent of the framers of the Constitution clearly and unambiguously with a view to keep it beyond the pale of any contraversy. Accordingly, the Constitution (Eighty-Second Amendment) Bill, 1997 was circulated to members of the Lok Sabha in March, 1997.

Setting up of development fund for Tourism

760. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government have initiated any proposal to set up development fund for tourism with a view to finance small infrastructure projects undertaken by State Governments and non-Government Organisations (NGO) throughout the country;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) whether Government have issued any guidelines; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA KUMAR JENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The details have not been finalised.

Memorandum by IATO for reforming Tourism Policy

761. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a conference of State Tourism Ministers was recently held at New Delhi to discuss mainly proposal contained in the Draft National Tourism Policy;

(b) if so, details of the agenda discussed and decisions taken;

(c) whether Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) have submitted a memorandum to Government seeking appropriate policy reform for promotion and development of tourism in the country to tap vast untapped potential in tourism industry; and